

Why the end of obnoxious influencer whore culture may finally have arrived

By

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Influencers — those obnoxious (and increasingly) political hype beasts who've defined much of internet life in the last decade — may finally be going the way of the Apple Watch: once a flashy trendsetter, now a garish relic.

When a jacked-up fitness bro went viral in late March for a video flaunting his daily [six-hour morning saga](#) of 4 a.m. pushups, mineral water ice plunges, and banana peel facials, it was mocked into oblivion.

Hipsters posted their own derisive morning routines, huffing on flavored vapes and chugging Red Bull; [grannies filmed themselves](#) putting in their dentures before settling in on the john. One [man from India did his take](#): dunking his face in a bowl of chutney then hopping on the phone to scam Westerners for their banking info.



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@ashtonhallofficial / TikTok

Frankly, even the most devoted followers are finally becoming fed up with just how fake influencing has become.

Accounts like Instagram's [Influencers In The Wild](#) (now with 5.2 million followers) became the first to gain popularity by sharing candid, alternate-angle videos taken of clout chasers doing their thing in public — usually exposing how staged and ridiculous they are.

Recently, eight influencers in China contracted a foot fungus around the same time — [it was later revealed](#) they'd been sharing the same pair of Gucci tights for content where they pretend to be rich and glamorous.



The Tesla attacks are proof that the left is turning on itself in orgy of liberal cannibalism

Internet sleuths have found [fake private jet studios](#) where influencers pay around \$60 to rent the space to create polished illusions of private air travel. And some [luxury hotels have moved to ban influencers](#) altogether, tired of them begging for free accommodations or pooling their money together to rent suites to stage their phony fabulousness.

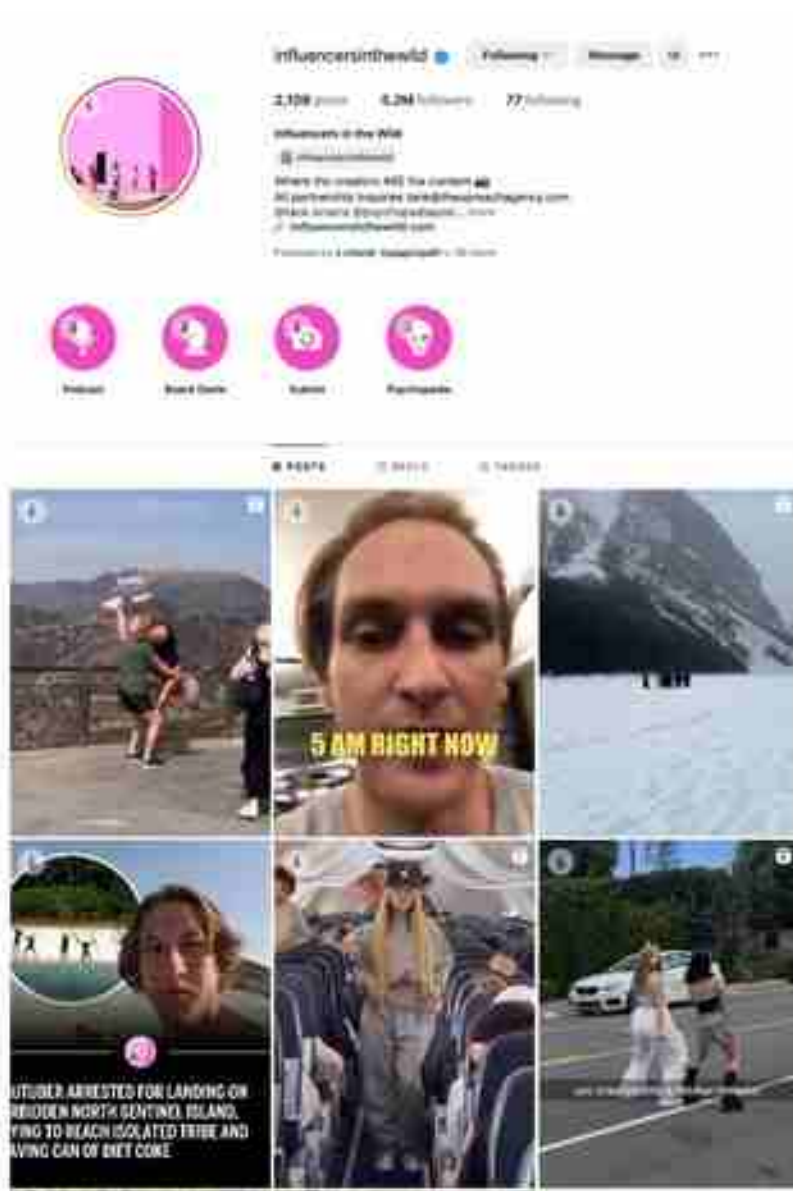
Plenty of other digital tastemakers are being exposed as just plain jerks: [like the couple who asked](#) a London-based musician to fly to their extravagant wedding in Ibiza, write a personalized song for them, and perform a one-hour set. They couldn't offer money but promised to pay him in "promo posts."

Not only are people sick of being made to feel bad about themselves by those who, more likely than not, have more sordid lives than the average person, the greatest currency in media today is authenticity.

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Ron Adar / M10s / MEGA

That's one reason cable news has tanked, and podcasts are dominating — the latter provides buttoned-down conversations from personalities with whom the audience feels a connection. Compare that to the nipped, tucked, scripted bells and whistles of television — or a travel vlogger gushing about a "remote paradise" that's actually just an AI-edited tourist trap. And increasingly, we expect authenticity from our politicians, too. Trump's matter-of-fact style and ad-libbed three-hour-long rallies couldn't have been a greater contrast to Kamala Harris's fine-tuned duplicity and fake laugh.



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Social media audiences haven't only caught on to rented Birkin bags and phony housewives agonizing over, say, their child's artisanal packed lunch featuring a gold-dusted bento box. Political influencers are feeling the backlash, too.

Last month, as the DOGE revolution slashed government waste and Trump's HHS Secretary RFK Jr. aimed to Make America Healthy Again, several prominent MAGA X accounts suddenly defended using food stamps for junk food products like Coke.

Exploiting a "small government"/anti-authoritarian angle, the campaign was likely buoyed by payments from Big Soda, especially since sugary drinks account for 10% of the USDA's \$113 billion annual food stamp spending and an estimated 20-40% of Coke's revenue.



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For the influencers, it was a misstep that risked their credibility, presuming their audience would gracefully accept that welfare recipients buying junk food with taxpayer funds actually aligned with the finer points of libertarianism.

Worse, many tried to weaponize the president’s notorious love of [Diet Coke](#) in their arguments — suggesting that if you don’t support taxpayer money going to Coca-Cola, you fail the MAGA purity test.

Beyond pay-for-play, X has turned into a relentless engagement mill since it started financially rewarding interactions, amplifying the post-election aimlessness of political influencers and transforming daily news into a shrill echo chamber of simplistic, click-chasing noise.

More people seem to be tuning out from all of this grasping artificiality; 34% of Gen-Zers have quit one or more social media platforms, according to [advertising giant Hill Holiday](#).

And that might be good news for parents.

A 2023 [survey found 56% of Zers](#) wanted to pursue influencing as a career, compared with another study noting that the same number of Chinese kids considered astronauts to be their dream job.